

Each of the foregoing new independent claims (claims 40 and 77) includes what Applicants submit are the patentable characteristics of previously allowed claim 36 of the parent application hereto. In particular, none of the cited references discloses an optical interconnect system including a plurality of selectively actuatable 2x2 optical elements, in which each of the all-optical signal paths extending therethrough have the same pathlength, as claimed. Applicants further submit that such a construction would not have been rendered obvious by the cited references, for the reasons discussed previously in the parent application. For these reasons, claims 40 and 77 are believed patentable over the art of record.

The dependent claims submitted herewith are believed allowable for the same reasons as the independent claims from which they depend, as well as for their own additional limitations.

Conclusion

This application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action at an early date is respectfully requested. However, if the Examiner believes there are any remaining issues, Applicant's undersigned representative respectfully requests a telephone call to discuss the case.

Respectfully submitted,

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